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son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, on the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relationship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsezi* (bridegroom) has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsezi* is greatly honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his people to all most feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift. One day, when Mudigs's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsezi* (her husband's sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsezi*'. The honour accorded a *tsezi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when they visit his relatives-in-law. 602

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law, he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10s. after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must do so. Ratzanedi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal, they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful, promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it. [576]

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village and even proscribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they rose him by giving him a small gift (6d. or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly, when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of the village till they rose her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means of a gift, are associated with marriage. 602 431

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face with one of the cloths she wears and turn half aside. Often several 534 431

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534 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they rose her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to woo all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of
[535] Madinji married Nagumbi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagumbi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracised nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Letjavula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and
582 negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.
609 The *munyoalo* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *munyoalo* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'curing the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
533 charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

513 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
584 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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one speaks of 'binding the kin'; but the ceremonial of all marriages significantly stresses this aim. The boy takes no prominent part in the proceedings; it is his mother who, as cattle-linked sister of his maternal uncle, is entitled to ask the uncle for a daughter and, as we have seen, he can refuse her only at the peril of having his house broken down. His sense of obligation, owing to the cattle he received, explains why the transaction must be in a ceremonial form.

There is no trace of hostility between the *vuhalulo* (sister's sons) and the *vunukhulo* (the people of the brother who gives the bride); they are always on the best of terms, even in the midst of the marriage negotiations. Structurally, the relationships between the two groups are liable to strains and tensions—so much so that *khosi* proceedings mainly turn upon, and have developed their special genius for effecting compromises in connexion with them. But equally the social system strives to set up reciprocities and to further smooth relations between them. An aggressive potentiality in the social system is converted into a co-operative actuality. We must expect no recriminations between the intermarrying groups, no bargaining for advantages, and no competitive displays; and indeed there are none.

All communications of a formal nature go through a *khosigo* (umpire, one who settles disputes) or *mudzila* (one who goes on the road between the parties); and both sides have such an umpire. In a cattle-linked cross-cousin marriage these umpires appear on the stage, not when the 'cradle' is sent, but only later. Their main function is phrased as being official witnesses of the gifts that pass and, in actual fact, in the courts it is always upon the evidence of the *mukwae* that reliance is placed; the *khosi* hardly ever decides what has to be returned upon divorce without calling them as witnesses. It is possible that their intervention between the parties in the marriage negotiations adds to the dignity and decorum of the situation; but they do not appear to be there to avoid the friction that in other tribes accompanies the hard bargaining. The gifts that may be asked are institutionalized and the idea that one party is trying to outwit the other is utterly foreign. The bride's people ask for what they want; the bridegroom's people do not always give it, but they never refuse: they say they will go and 'look for' it. It is a familiar formula—people are always 'looking for' the things they owe others; they may never find them, but that on the whole does not matter; what is important is the expression of their willingness. Bargaining and calculation are abhorrent; they cannot co-exist with the great reliance of the social structure upon mutuality and co-operation. And so in the marriage negotiations there is never any inquiry as to the resources of the boy's people, no tacit, much less express, agreement beforehand as to how much is to be handed over for the bride. The *munyanda* for a princess is no different from the *munyanda* for a commoner. The transactions move on slowly, perhaps over a period of many years. One may roughly distinguish certain stages, and here and there a stage, for some reason, not commonly experienced with the end result, is emphasized, marked by the delivery of a special beast or thrown into relief by a significant ceremony; but on the whole there is not the gradual unfolding of a plan such as in the initiations.

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that they have a personal stake in the social investment; their desire for 583
recognition cannot be ignored; to maintain their interest at the requisite
intensity, they must be significantly rewarded. And so the 'cow-and-calf
of the women's place' is conceived to be a personal reward to the bride's
mother; it is her special property, not, indeed, to be detached from the
chain of exchanges, for moneynuts cattle must remain moneynuts cattle
and can never become unencumbered property of an individual, but to
be preserved by her, if she so desires, in order that she may help her [131]
youngest son, who succours her in her old age. Often in the old days
when the bride's chastity was an honour to be displayed, but rarely
to-day, because absence of chastity is a disgrace to be concealed, the
'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' was withheld or claimed back if the
bride proved not to be a virgin. As things are to-day, this gift mainly
recognizes, as it also did in the old days, the spiritual contribution of the
mother to the health and strength and virtues of her daughter, the bride.
The 'beast for bartering' is a contribution to help the mother of the bride,
but not so much in her personal capacity as in her capacity as food-
provider of the home; owing to the aversion to killing cattle, this beast
passes to-day only in times of shortage when the bride's mother is really
in need of grain.

The 'cow-and-calf of the courtyard' recognizes the special interest of
the father and vicariously his male relatives; it is a gift that acknowledges
their special services in bringing up the bride. The situation must be
made acceptable also to the bride herself, for marriage is not an easy
matter, involving new and heavy responsibilities and partially severing
the bride from her home. In the old days the girl was usually given the
mmabadile, a cow, said to provide a change of clothing for her; to-day she
is given £5 or £6 worth of clothes. But the rule that she forfeited this
wedding outfit if she were found to be deflowered is in disuse to-day,
since young men object to the public humiliation of their brides.

There are many other gifts which, apart from contributing to the main
result, recognize particular aspects of the situation. The sending of the
'cradle', for instance, intimates that the sister lays her claim to the bride
as her daughter-in-law and, when the goat is killed and members from
both families partake of the meat, it is the tacit consent to the projected
alliance to which the families, rather than the boy and girl, are the true
parties. Or, again, the 'calabash of water', usually a goat, signifies that
the boy is asking the girl to come and set up home with him, while the
girl's people equally indicate with the 'goat of killing' their satisfaction
that all they asked has been duly given and that, so far as they are con-
cerned, the bride may safely leave. *

All too soon we must pass on to some other aspects of marriage cere- 584
monial. The absence of strained relations between the parties makes
unnecessary the subterfuges and displays of hostility often found else-
where in marriage negotiations. The go-between, whatever message he
brings from the boy's family, is well received, for 'The messenger sent to
swear at a king must fulfil his mission and cannot be harmed'. His first
announcement is direct and to the point: 'I am sent by So-and-so to ask
whether you will *hoka* them' (that is, carry the girl in the cradle). This

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584 applies to marriages between strangers, for in the case of marriages between persons 'born for' one another, there is no go-between at this stage. The girl may dislike the proposed alliance and, though there is great social pressure on her to accept a proposal coming from the father's cattle-linked sister, she is not quite powerless. The society dislikes resorting to any form of compulsion. A proverb warns people that an unwilling bride is liable to commit suicide or to suffer some misfortune, and it is legitimate to send back the answer, 'We have no power. Ask the girl.' This formula seems to contradict *maywalo* dispositions, but the culture is full of apparent contradictions testifying to its flexibility and to the subjection even of institutional arrangements to the desire for agreement and compromise. At the formal betrothal, involving a public exchange of gifts, it is quite often not the bridegroom, even if he is available, but his sister or even his daughter that acts for him. One often sees a man's daughter paying what we would call the formal courting visit not merely on occasion, but from the beginning throughout all the years of negotiation until the end of the actual wedding. Indeed, the wedding itself may be by what we would call 'proxy'.

The courtship visits provide the prospective bridegroom with an opportunity for self-expression and contact with the age-mates of his bride, at least if he is not already an old man. Certainly, however, courtship is a conception very different from ours. The young man always takes a companion (if his sister or daughter goes, she also will take with her a girl friend) who serves as a link between him and the bride's friends. These are the affairs of the young people, which provide a whole side-show of their own, with its own rules, its observances, its entertainments and so on. There is no set number of visits and, except for the last visit, no development in the formal relations of the parties. The bride never reciprocates these visits. Restraint and caution characterize the bridegroom's, not his companion's, attitude, but he does not resist, or require any persuasion to accept the hospitality. Similarly, the bride maintains her distance, veiled in her blanket and inaccessible to her suitor, but her companions are not so reserved. The whole outward behaviour pattern is almost exactly that which is expected when a son-in-law or any member of his group visits his parents-in-law or any member of their group, with this addition that the bridegroom and bride are subject to special taboos, while by contrast, in private at least, their companions relax to an extent which we might regard as licentious.

In olden days there was a custom called *ku khatswa dinzai*, whereby the leader of the group of girls placed cakes of porridge one on top of the other on her left hand and thus offered food to the visiting bridegroom and his companion, but the last cake, the one resting on her hand, could not be eaten by them. It had to be left, just as nowadays some of the food given by the girls to the visitors must be left in the basket, as a sign, they say, of their good manners. There are countless observances of this nature, designed to impress upon the visitors the importance of good manners and dignified behaviour, and upon the hosts the necessity of being hospitable to their future brother-in-law. These things are of

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supreme consequence in supporting the structure that the marriage will eventually build up. Courtship visits are concerned, not with courting, but with laying the foundations of the new pattern of reciprocity between the young people. They were cross-cousins before, free and easy in their relations with one another; after the marriage they are in-laws, between whom the delicate balance of adult privileges and responsibilities must be evenly maintained. 584

The courtship visits have other functions. They would hardly appeal to the young if there were no lighter side to the heavy burden of their serious purpose. All Lovedu ceremonial recognises the need for diversity, for dramatic interest, for ringing the changes between the serious and the superficial, the purposeful and the playful, the grave and the comic. The bridegroom, unseen by his bride though he be, has a thrill in displaying his best clothes. He sometimes deliberately breaks taboos. In the old days the *mumbullo* used to 'reveal' the bride, for only after it the bridegroom could see her and speak to her in private, a privilege he obtains to-day by a gift of a few shillings or more (*ku nosa*) long before the *mumbullo* is given. Nevertheless, there is to-day adventure in going to the store, where, besides making her wishes felt by requiring this or that as part of her *mumbullo* (change of clothes), the bride must be coaxed by gifts to look at one thing, to handle another, and at every step. After he brings the calabash of water, 'the beast of asking the bride to come home with him', the bridegroom and his companion come on the *ku sula* visit. *Ku sula* means that they will 'trouble' the girl and her companions. In other tribes the parents have to be 'begged' to release the bride; the Lovedu *ku sula* is designed to irritate the parents so that they will be impatient of the bride's unwillingness to go and will bring pressure to bear upon her. For the *mumyendo* has all passed and the will of the bride must not be allowed to cause them discomfort. The boy's companion especially makes things unpleasant. He interferes with the work of the girls, worries and annoys them at night when they want to sleep. He tries to stir their hearts by playing a plaintive stringed instrument, pinches and beats them. But what is really effective is his interference with their cooking: he throws sticks and filth into the porridge pots, and the older people, always particular about the cleanliness of their food, complain bitterly and say that the bride had better go. [431]

The drama ends usually with an exciting 'elopement' of the couple. It is not a true but an institutionalized elopement. Sometimes it does not occur and sometimes it occurs even after a religious ceremony with which, strictly speaking, it is incompatible. Indeed, theoretically the giving of the *mumbullo* is supposed to exclude resort to an elopement. But the 'elopement' is so common that it is the only form usually described. One night the bridegroom, having left it, 'the thing resting under the mat', which in the old days was an arrow, surreptitiously escapes with the bride and her companions. The 'thing under the mat' explains the flight. The journey to the bridegroom's village is painfully slow: at each stop the girls call a halt and have to be persuaded by gifts (*ku nosa*) to move on; they may even have to be pushed, threatened, carried. The bride is completely covered with a blanket amid the troop of girls as they 585 431

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *mejï* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*moshe*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepise in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called "husband"

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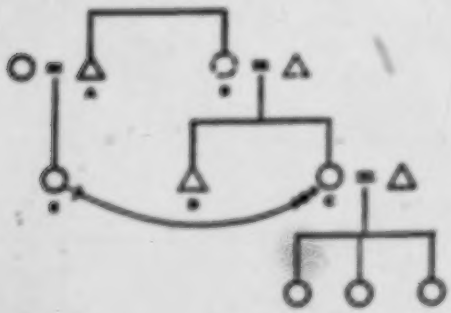
EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE



△○ DECEASED
←— MOVEMENT OF A WOMAN IN MARRIAGE

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepise's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepise (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepise's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepise and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepise (*o ne kekile*), who came [601] to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepise (E) not '*mafi*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mahadiki*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

562 (*mmma ne ka*) by their 'wives' *batsumi* when they marry on
588 behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children
601 of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter
583 appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maserība's
583 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years
585 later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batsumi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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595 house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is
422 done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and
593 another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

595 A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on
423 the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to
602 exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields
[428] from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still
593 young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though
602 it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

595 Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives
602 of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's
767 side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

● 594 In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and